

Inventory of U.S. Marine Managed Areas



General Marine Managed Areas (MMA) Inventory Information

Purpose: A collaborative effort to gather comprehensive information on place-based marine resource management under federal, state, territorial, or tribal jurisdiction in U.S. marine and Great Lakes waters.

Definitions: The term ‘marine managed area’ (MMA) was developed and defined to be broader than ‘marine protected area,’ (MPA) to better understand the scope of existing areas that are established for some conservation purpose in the marine environment. The final definitions of MMA criteria can be found at www.mpa.gov or in the *Federal Register* (70 FR 351221).

Data Collection and Availability

- Each site’s data was collected by the managing federal or state agency, an MPA Center/Coastal States Organization hired-intern, and/or by NOAA, and reviewed by federal agencies, states and territories prior to posting.
- The MMA Inventory data is publicly available on www.mpa.gov.

Benefits and Uses of the Inventory

- The Inventory is a useful tool for managers, scientists, and the public to make informed decisions about the conservation of coastal, marine and Great Lake resources. For example, it will be used to help state and federal MPA managers develop a suite of information, tools, and methods for regional MPA planning and adaptive management.
- The Inventory is the first step towards developing a national system of MPAs as called for in *Presidential Executive Order 13158 on Marine Protected Areas*.
- There are many benefits afforded to states and territories through the gathering of comparable data associated with state MMAs and those of other states and federal agencies regionally. For example, states and territories with coral reef management plans will use the Inventory to fill in gaps in data to better protect coral reefs.

Marine Managed Areas Inventory Features and Uses

Inventory Atlas: An online GIS mapping tool (ArcIMS Map Service Tool) that allows the user to:

- Identify and map the location of MMA boundaries through a GIS
- Create custom maps
- Download GIS boundary data for analysis

Database Query Function: A search function to call up MMAs and data based on site attributes. Allows the user to:

- Search the collected data using custom queries
- Find answers to commonly asked questions that can also be found in the “Key Questions” section on www.MPA.gov
- Use the database to research MMAs for analysis

Site Profiles: Displays a unique page of information for each site, including:

- Location, purpose, natural resources, legal authorities, and relevant site management and zone information
- Link (where available) to official websites of the managing agencies and full regulation text
- Locator map and pictures of the site (as available)

Data Download: Allows the user to download the following data for their use:

- MMA site data: download a spreadsheet containing all the information for each site in the Inventory
- GIS boundary data: download shapefiles and metadata of site(s) boundaries (as available)

History of MMA Inventory Project

2000: Presidential Executive Order 13158 on Marine Protected Areas signed

2001: Initial MMA database and website developed

2002: State and federal data collection begun

2005: Most federal data complete

2006: Upgrade of database and new passcodes for state representatives

2006: All collected state and federal data posted

Marine Managed Areas Inventory History Questions:

When were the first state data posted as draft or final?

The first data was submitted by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands on August 15, 2002, and it was posted to the mpa.gov website in the fall of 2002. California and Virginia both gave permission to post their data as draft in September 2004.

When did GIS data collection and posting begin?

The earliest request was August 2003. Static maps were available prior to the ArcIMS, but true posting did not begin until the SQL server database and ArcIMS functions went online in 2004.

Status of Marine Managed Areas Inventory (as of February 2006)

(please see www.mpa.gov for more up-to-date information)

Federal Sites:

NOAA

National Marine Fisheries Service – Data completed

National Marine Sanctuary Program – Data completed

NOAA-State Partnership

National Estuarine Research Reserves – Data completed

Department of the Interior

National Park Service – Data completed

Fish and Wildlife Service – Partial data set; regional offices will enter data March-April 2006

Minerals Management Service – Partial data set; data to be complete in spring 2006

State Sites:

Number of states/territories with posted data: 22

Number of states/territories actively working on data: 5

Number of states/territories with no data submitted/not participating: 8

Questions about the Marine Managed Areas Inventory

Without data from all states, the Inventory is incomplete. When will the Inventory be complete?

What is the plan for filling these gaps and keeping the Inventory up to date?

The MMA Inventory is an ongoing database that will be maintained on a regular basis. As of March 2006, all data collected has been posted to the Inventory website. Several states and federal MMA programs, however, have either chosen not to have their data posted or are in the process of collecting and/or verifying their information. In addition, an effort to work with tribes to consider including tribal sites in the Inventory is underway. More specific and up-to-date status information can be found at www.mpa.gov. The MPA Center will continue to work with state, territory, and federal representatives to fill remaining data gaps, correct inaccuracies, and provide opportunities for updates and improvements of the data.

How do sites in the MMA inventory relate to the national system of MPAs? How will sites from the MMA inventory be included in the national system of MPAs?

The information on federal, state, and territorial MMA sites will be used as baseline data for developing the national system of MPAs as required by Executive Order 13158. First, the data has helped to identify a common set of site characteristics across a subgroup of MMA sites that will help to define the term 'marine protected area' for the purposes of the national system. In addition, the Inventory provides site information that will serve as a significant basis for identifying eligible sites for inclusion in the national system. Once identified as eligible, the MPA Center will work with the managing agency or agencies to determine if they should be included. Finally, the data, along with information on natural and cultural resources and human uses, will help agencies to identify conservation gaps and future priorities.

Why is there no data for certain states, like Alaska and New York?

Some states have chosen not to participate in the MMA Inventory data collection process at this time for various reasons. The MPA Center hopes that these states will eventually submit data to the Inventory to help complete the national MMA database, and aid in developing the science-based national system of MPAs.

Why do certain states or federal programs and sites have more data than others?

The amount of data collected on specific federal, state, and territorial MMA sites varies due to several reasons, such as a lack of publicly available information for certain data; a shortage of resources to allow for more robust data collection; and remaining questions related to the accuracy of initial data collection. Over the long term, the MPA Center will work with its partners to post as much of the available information as possible for each MMA in the inventory.

For More Information

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